

The Beacon

James A. Haley VA Hospital

Rehab Quarterly Newsletter



“Faith, Lives and Lets Live”



I have never been seriously ill before so it was quite a shock when over a period of 24 hours I lost all of the feeling in both my arms, hands, and legs.

At first I thought that I might have pinched a nerve in bad back and it was just bad luck. When it got to the point that I couldn't even crawl across the floor, I decided (well my wife actually) that I needed to get to the hospital (Sept 3rd.)

I can remember very little about what happened for the first two weeks in the hospital. I knew I was totally paralyzed and could hear the doctors talking about maybe having to put me on a ventilator to help me breathe. I was in the Intensive Care Unit for nearly a week before transferring to the 5th floor to get medically stable enough to transfer to 2CN Physical Rehabilitation (Sept 16). At that time I was still completely paralyzed from the waist down, and my hands were so numb that I couldn't even use them. I couldn't swallow food or even water.

Likely, seeing that I was upset about not even being able to turn myself over in bed, a wonderful nurse told me straight out that if I wanted to stay in bed all the time, I would likely get my wish...for the rest of my life! As with many neurological disorders, Gillian Barre Syndrome affects the body as if I had a brain stem stroke, paralyzing both sides of my body. If I didn't start working with my rehabilitation team RIGHT NOW, I would continue to get weaker and I could die.

When I transferred to PM&RS, physical rehabilitation, and began meeting with my treatment team, I was told about what I was in for with rehab. I began work right then, scheduled for Speech Pathology so I could swallow again. I began with Physical Therapy for

walking, balance, and strengthening. Occupational Therapy for my upper body strength and so I could re-learn to bathe, dress and feed myself; and Therapeutic Recreation to assist me in improving the strength of my arms and muscle tone and fine motor skills of my hands. I wanted to write again and even more important, be able to play guitar again. I began every day, with the support of nursing help, with everything I needed to begin my day. My faith in God, and newfound faith in my treatment team helped give me life again.

Until that time I was not even strong enough to push myself in my wheelchair, but I gained strength through despising that chair. It took two weeks before I could even stand, with help, on the P.T. parallel bars. At that point I began progressing in all therapies, exhausted at the end of everyday but now with a smile on my face. I'm getting better and I see it. My next largest gain was in being able to take care of myself through techniques taught to me in O.T. My final test was to be my guitar, after three weeks of not even being able to hold it or feel it. I worked daily trying to make my fingers work again to play chords, over and over. I'm now able to play during church services again.

When released from treatment to go home, I walked out the front door of the hospital with just a cane and my wife on my arm. My faith in God, and my new “team” will always walk with me.

Ron Reva



Clinton Daniel was presented a plaque by Dr. Bowen, Chief of Staff, and Dr. Scott, Chief of PM&RS, on November 20, 2003, at the New Port Richey OP Clinic. The Plaque was signed by Thomas V. Holohan, M.D. FACP, Chief Patient Care Service Officer, Veterans Health Administration, Washington DC. Clinton was recognized for his outstanding contribution in developing the E-CARF Survey Computer Program.

The James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital has developed an electronic media to present the CARF (the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission) standards and the facility's efforts to meet the CARF standards. The production of a CD-ROM provided for an in-depth review of volumes of materials within a short period of time for the CARF Surveyors. The major improvement stemming from the E-CARF design is the ability of all PM&RS staff to continually review and, if needed, immediately update any CARF standard in the E-CARF design. This facet of the E-CARF design provides an avenue for continuous quality improvement for PM&RS and a state of readiness between surveys. Once the E-CARF design is complete, it is anticipated the large amount of staff time needed for preparation of the next CARF Survey will be greatly reduced.

The technical expertise for this project came from Mr. Clinton Daniel, who at the time was a Physical Therapy Assistant at the James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital. Mr. Daniel has since transferred to New Port Richey Outpatient Clinic as an Information Technology Specialist. He has recently developed an Electronic CARF Survey Consulting Package. This consulting package provides instructions on the process of completing a CARF survey through the means of an electronic medium.



Anna Debogorski

I am a Master of Physical Therapy student from Cleveland State University, completing my final clinical rotation here at the James A. Haley VA Medical Center. I have spent 6 weeks in rehab on 2C North with Lara Trentadue, MSPT as my clinical instructor, and 2 additional weeks with Myriam Montes, PT in SCI-D. My background consists of a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering (1999) from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH and 3 years of work at the Louis Stokes VA Medical Center in Cleveland as the biomedical engineer on the functional electrical stimulation stroke research project. I worked specifically with patients post stroke, researching the effects of implanted functional electrical stimulation on stroke rehab. My interests lie in rehabilitation of post stroke as well as most other neurological conditions. I have

been hired again by the Cleveland VA as a physical therapist in their spinal cord injury center. My future plans include getting a PhD in biomechanics and continuing to pursue research for patients with neurological conditions. Since I have been here at the Tampa VA, I have had the opportunity to give physical therapy care to our veterans in need of PT services. I have been welcomed warmly by all of the staff, especially members of the rehab team. I would like to thank everyone for making my stay very enjoyable and for having the opportunity to have a first-rate educational experience.

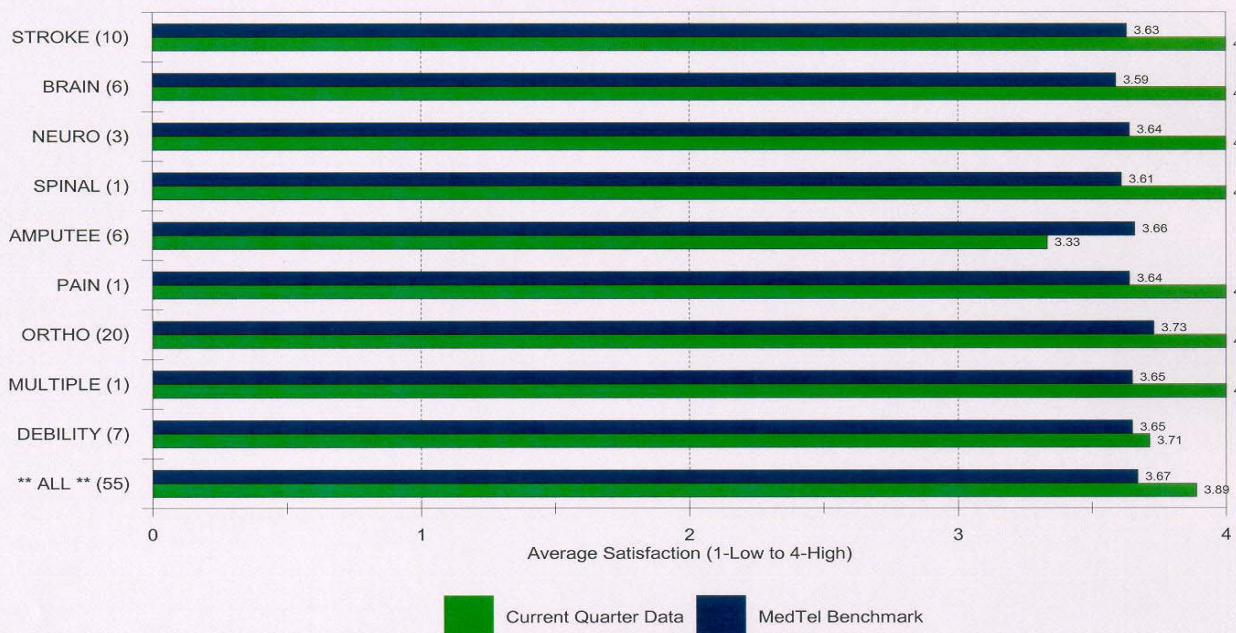
Performance Improvement

10/08/03

MEDTEL
OUTCOMES
Section 1
Page 6
 Followup Period 7/1/03 to 9/30/03
 Discharge Period 4/1/03 to 6/30/03

For Customer Number : 104

Average Satisfaction



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A Happy And Safe Holiday
Season To All!

The Beacon
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